

WALKERS. A numerous clan.

Walker, claiming as it does an almost unrivalled position in the rolls of our nomenclature, reminds us of the early fashion of treading out cloth before the adaptations of the machinery were brought to bear on the phrase of the craft.

In Wycliffe's version of the Story of Christ's transfiguration he speaks of his clothes shining so as no "fuller or walker of cloth may make white upon earth. In the Chester play, the weavers and walkers marched together.

C.W. Dadsley.

Our English Sur

Walkers of Sarum (Wilts) and of Yorkshire Chevron & 3 birds arms granted 1554 confirmed 22th June 1562. Crest-- demi-tiger walk in the way of God.

Walker of Crompton Basset. Chevron, 3bezants and Walker Heneage.

The walkers cannot boast of any aristocratic descent, yet they have respectable record of an old English family of the middle class or lesser country gentry. Henry VIII gave lands to a walker, so says the original grants which in 1809 was in the possession of William Walker of Killingbeck Hall. See Walkers Essays. Quiet country gentlemen lived on their land for three centuries the estate of Wylam at Wylam on Tyne eight miles west from Newcastle a place afterwards famous as the birth place of George Stephenson.

The estate must have been a considerable one for when James I. revived an absolute statute of Edward II ~~which compelled~~ which compelled all those who held land to the value of a knights fee to assume the rank and duties of a knight, or pay a heavy fine, one Thos or John Walker, the then holder of the estate submitted to be knighted. It is said that the estate has descended under an unbroken line till the present day - middle of 18 century.

In the year 1748 the Rev Thos Walker - born 1704. died 1763 a Unitarian Minister (family Unitarians) at Durham migrated to Yorkshire and became minister of Mill Hill Chapel in Park Row, Leeds This venerable chapel was built in 1704 and is said to be the first dissenting meeting house in the North of England erected after the general indulgence. Like so many other of the dissenting meeting houses its congregation had become Unitarian. It was for a number of years presided over by the celebrated Dr Priestly.

The Rev T.W. died in ~~1811~~ 1763 had a large family. The elder branch moved in a higher social scale than the younger, one an officer in the 3rd Regiment of Guards, fell at Talavera. Some were called to the Bar, some were merchants and others established themselves as country gentlemen.

His son William, died 1850, purchased the estate of Killingbeck Hall, and a son that of Wilsick House near Doncaster, which houses were inhabited respectively in by two old bachelor brothers.

It seems that the Rev Thos was not the only member of the family whom choice or some stronger motive led from the old home. At least one of his elder brothers must have migrated at an earlier date and have entered into trade for we find that Thos' nephew John and George were born at Newcastle in 1726 & 1735 resp.

Of these younger George attained some note in his day. He also was a Unitarian minister, his first congregation being at Durham next Great Yarmouth, 1761 Warrington 1772, Nottingham 1774, and about 1798 he became Professor of Theology at New College (Unitarian) Mathematics and Classic Manchester.

But it was in the Domain of Science that the Rev attained his distinction. He was an intimate friend of Dr. Priestly, and

Gilbert Wakefield. He was an able mathematic and wrote a book on the theory of the Sphere. Treatise on the Conic Sections. Dissenters Plea against the Test Oath. 2 volumes of sermons and 2 volumes of essays of which his friend Gilbert Wakefield says

They are pregnant with the Celestial fire of Genius and with the vigour of noble sentiments. The essays were received by John Forster in the Eclectic Review 1809 Critical Rev. Analytical Rev.

1. On the doctrines of the sphere. 1774-7 4
2. Dissenters Flea against the Test Laws. 1790
3. Sermons on various subjects 1790
4. Tractize on Conic Sections in 5 books. Bk. 1 1794
5. Essays on various subjects with life of the author. 1809.

But all his works are long since forgotten.

The biographical sketch prefixed to the essays gives us the impression of a most amiable disposition and blameless life and of considerable intellect and power.

He died in London in 1807 at the age of 72 at the house of his friend Dr Abraham Rees editor of Rees Encyclopaedia and was buried in Dr Rees family vault in Bunhill Fields.

George's elder brother John chose a commercial life in the business of manufacturing saddlers and military accoutrement

maker. During the Great War with France was a contractor for saddles and accoutrements for the army. Before this time he had either lived or partly lived in Paris, where the family were during the Terror. I have often heard my father repeat the stories which he heard from the elder sisters of the horrors of these days, where crouching behind the curtains they saw from their windows the frantic mobs rushing past yelling revolutionary songs and carrying the heads of aristocrats on pikes.

This elder family were mostly girls and from their long residences in France became almost naturalised, seven of the daughters married Frenchmen, Dubeye, Chaperon, Du Can, some of them went over to the Roman Catholic faith. They were most of them in poor circumstances and lived mostly in France, Paris and Brittan, earning a precarious living by teaching. One of them had considerable skill as an artist. I have a portrait in water colours of my grandfather taken when he was over 90. It shows a long thin rather delicate face, though fairly prominent features but with a fresh and healthy looking complexion.

Madame Dubeye died in Paris in 1850. Two sisters Madame DuCan and Elizabeth Walker came to England where my father's good friend the firstman's showed them many kindnesses. They supported

themselves by teaching. Madame DuCan died at Saffron Walden in 1842. My aunt Elizabeth survived until 1861.

I have very vivid recollections of this old lady who was living at Newcastle when I was there in 1856. A humble and devoted, R.C. in very straitened circumstances. She had a patient contented face and very warm recollections of her handsome and loveable young brother of whom she delighted to talk. The eldest daughter, Fanny married Edmund Robson in the N. of England, the father of captain who was an officer at Waterloo and in later years migrated to Tasmania and lived for many years at Port Sorell leaving many descendants behind him.

During the war my grandfather and some of his relations at least were settled in Newcastle where he carried on his business and was a contractor for the army. He does not seem to have had much intercourse with his brother the Unitarian Minister and professor and indeed it is said there was an estrangement between them.

At what period his first wife died or what family she belonged to - I cannot say, nor when my grandfather made his second marriage. His second partner was Elizabeth Ridley, daughter of Richard Ridley of Newcastle and apparently possessor of some property. By his second wife he had also a large family making the total 22 in all. Few of his second family grew

up. One boy went to sea, and was never heard of again. Two of the girls died when approaching womanhood, several died in infancy. My father was the youngest child (of 22) born in Adelphi, London, 19 March 1800 when his father was 74 years old. His mother who was always a delicate woman died in infancy and his sister Madame DuCan took charge of him for a time. The family must have been living in London for I have often heard my father say that his first recollection was his father taking him to see the funeral of Nelson 1805. My grandfather however shortly after this went over to Paris where he seemed to have settled permanently, his eldest son Jean carrying on his business and eventually taking the management. The business apparently did not flourish probably it fell off in the declaration of peace and the old man lived on in narrow circumstances until the year 1821 when after a long time of apyrital illness he died at the great age of 96, having it seems removed his Unitarianism for more orthodox views. He was buried in Piere la Chaise. I have a sketch of his tomb sent to my father by a French friend of the family. The epitaph describes him as-

When my grandfather went over to Paris he left his little son in charge of his half sister Madame Du Can, but in 1807 through the kind offers of the Priestman's he was transferred to the care of his maternal relations at Newcastle and was henceforth brought up by his maternal grandmother Hidley, who had married a second time to Mr Addison by whom she had a second family with whom the delicate little child was brought up. The family were still Unitarians and my father was baptised by the Unitarians minister at the age of 10 years.

His maternal Grandmother who had married a second time to Mr Addison died in the end of 1812 or beginning of 1813. Her personalty was sworn under £1000. She left a legac, to her grand daughter Augusta Walker and constituted George Washington Walker her residuary legatee. By the death of his sister in 1814 G.W. W. became entitled to £500 as residuary legatee of his grandmother.

This George Washington Walker was our grandfather.

I don't know how I became possessed of this but thought you folk should have it. The boys will be interested by it I expect.

Walker

genealogy

Imagine the man
with 22 children
they sure did have
families in those
days.

I wonder who washed
& ironed their clothes!!